Weighted Workload Assessment Study for Missouri Circuit Court Clerks

FINAL REPORT | APRIL 2026

Suzanne Tallarico
PRINCIPAL COURT MANAGEMENT CONSULTANT

DeShield Greene
SENIOR COURT MANAGEMENT CONSULTANT

Anthony Kim
COURT MANAGEMENT CONSULTANT

Emma Maier
PROJECT ASSOCIATE

NCSC

About NCSC

TRUSTED LEADERSHIP. PROVEN SOLUTIONS. BETTER COURTS.

The National Center for State Courts (NCSC) is a community of dedicated researchers, consultants and former practitioners who drive innovation and progress in courts and justice systems. NCSC's reputation for trusted leadership allows us to work alongside top judicial officers to examine some of the most complex and significant issues facing society. Our team of experts and court leaders are deeply committed to advancing just, free and safe communities.

Resources include webinars, on-site or remote technical assistance, education and training, and direct consulting. Our work is designed to make a difference. As the only organization that enjoys collaborative relationships with the Conference of Chief Justices, Conference of State Court Administrators and other associations of judicial leaders, NCSC has unique insight into the pressing challenges and opportunities facing state courts. Join us today in our work to advance just, free and safe communities.

Copyright © 2026 National Center for State Courts.

This document may be reproduced with attribution to National Center for State Courts.

Contents

About NCSC **ii**

Acknowledgments **v**

Missouri Clerical Weighted Workload Work Group Members v

Executive Summary **vii**

Introduction vii

Designing the project's framework viii

Missouri circuit court clerical time study. ix

Adequacy of Time Survey. ix

Data analysis and development of preliminary case weights. ix

Focus groups. ix

CWWL Work Group review, discussion, and decision-making. x

Summary of Findings x

Recommendations x

Recommendation 1 x

Recommendation 2 xi

Recommendation 3 xi

Introduction **1**

Weighted Workload Overview **2**

Clerical Weighted Workload Work Group **4**

Work Time Study **5**

Time Study Participants 5

Preparation for the Work Time Study 7

Work Time Data Collection Process 7

Data Elements in the Clerical Work Time Study 7

Case Type Categories 8

Clerical Work Activity Types 9

Distinguishing Caseload and Workload 11

Caseload Data 12

Preliminary Case Weights **12**

Special Analysis **14**

Qualitative Feedback **15**

Adequacy of Time (AOT) Survey and Focus Groups 15

CWWL Work Group Case Weights & Qualitative Data Review 19

Calculating the Clerical Work Year and Day 21

Clerk Year and Day Values 22

Recommendations 25

Recommendation 1 25

Recommendation 2 25

Recommendation 3 25

Appendix A: Event-Based Methodology Example 26

Appendix B: Case Type Categories and Definitions 28

Appendix C: Case-Related Activities and Definitions 33

Appendix D: Non-Case-Related Activities and Definitions 36

Appendix E: Adequacy of Time Survey Results – Primary Participants 38

Acknowledgments

The authors would like to thank the Missouri circuit court clerks and staff for their important contributions to this project. This effort would not have been possible without the help of an informed and committed clerical staff that generously dedicated their time.

During this study, we were fortunate to collaborate with a distinguished Clerical Weighted Workload Work Group, which played a key role in refining the study's approach and content.

We extend a special note of thanks to Sherri Paschal for all her involvement as project liaison and her gentle nudging to keep time study participation rates up high. We also thank Mark Ritchie and Blake Wenzel for additional IT and research support.

Missouri Clerical Weighted Workload Work Group Members

Hon. Mark A. Styles, Chair, Circuit Judge, 16th Circuit

Tiffany Philips, Vice Chair, 30th Circuit

Cindi Bowman, Circuit Clerk, 36th Circuit

Jill Whitworth, Juvenile Clerk, 20th Circuit

Matt Holt, Treatment Court Administrator, 1st Circuit

Jennifer Hotop, Circuit Clerk, 32nd Circuit

Thomas Kloeppinger, Circuit Clerk, 22nd Circuit

Hon. John LePage, Associate Circuit Judge, 40th Circuit

Maryann Jacquin, Criminal Clerk, 20th Circuit

Reba Retell, Accounting Clerk, 38th Circuit

Melissa Sherer, Probate Director, 16th Circuit

Courtney Smith, Criminal/Traffic Manager, 21st Circuit

Hon. Terry A. Tschannen, Presiding Judge, 9th Circuit

Elaine Wilson, Circuit Clerk, 4th Circuit

Amy Shimon, Civil Clerk, 34th Circuit

OSCA Staff: Sherri Paschal, Angela Fisher, Leanne Lorts, Mark Ritchey, Blake Wenzel, Justin Carver

Executive Summary

Introduction

In August 2025, the Missouri Circuit Court Budget Committee (CCBC) asked the State Courts Administrator (herein after OSCA) to contract the National Center for State Courts (hereinafter NCSC) to update the clerical weighted workload study last completed in 2023. Weighted workload studies provide court administrators with objective information about clerical resource needs based on the amount of time required to process different case types. This information is useful in determining the number of clerical staff needed to cover the circuit clerks' work based on the number and types of cases filed in each circuit.

Since 2002, CCBC has relied on a clerical weighted workload model to determine staffing resource needs in circuit clerk offices. Over time, the integrity of workload standards is affected by multiple influences, including changes in legislation, court rules, business processes, technology, and administrative factors. The current study also included the measurement of tasks associated with IV-D cases to more accurately determine the average case processing times of those cases for use in federal reimbursement for that work. These factors have altered the nature and volume of workload for court clerks, making the most recent weighted caseload formula, completed in 2023, outdated. Recognizing the importance of updating the clerical needs model, OSCA partnered with the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) to carry out an evidence-based evaluation of circuit court clerk workload.

The current study included collection of three types of data: (1) actual work time data recorded by clerks during a four-week study in all 115 counties; (2) a statewide survey of participating clerks requesting their assessment of the extent to which they have adequate time to perform their duties to their satisfaction; and (3) collection of qualitative feedback from focus group discussions with a sample of clerks across the state.

The new case weights reflect the average number of case-related minutes that clerks spend per year processing each of 24 different case types; they are based upon work time recorded by clerks across the state during the four-week study period. The case weights and other components of the weighted caseload model were reviewed and approved by the Clerical Weighted Workload Work Group (CWWL Work Group, or work group), which was appointed by the Circuit Court Budget Committee (CCBC.)

Case weights reflect the average number of case-related minutes that court clerks spend per year processing each of the different case types; and are based on work

time recorded by time study participants during a four-week study period. The work group reviewed, discussed, and approved these case weights and other components of the weighted caseload model.

This study is comprehensive and reliable because:

- 93% of the court clerks participated in the time study, substantially enhancing the data's credibility and validity.
- It included a survey of court clerks to assess whether they have adequate time to perform their duties. The adequacy of time survey data assisted in determining the reasonableness of the case weights, which were based solely on the work time data.
- The NCSC consultants conducted six focus groups involving court clerk staff to review and discuss the findings from the time study and the adequacy of time survey. The focus groups included a mix of clerical staff from around the state. The focus group participants also provided feedback on other factors that might not have been captured during the time study. This qualitative input informed the discussion and decisions made by the work group regarding the weighted caseload model.
- It was designed and conducted by NCSC consultants, who are national experts with 30 years of experience developing weighted caseload models for courts and other justice system agencies in over 40 states and territories.

Designing the project's framework

The CWWL Work Group met with the NCSC consultants in September 2025 to provide guidance for the weighted workload study. The work group provided advice and feedback on the overall study design, including which case types and activities to include in the weighted workload model, the methodology, content, and schedule of the training sessions before the time study, the duration of the time study, and the approach and composition of the focus groups. The CWWL requested that the Recorder of Deeds time be captured in this study as a non-case related activity to determine the impact on those counties with dual office holders (Circuit Clerk and Recorder of Deeds). It should be noted that the Department of Social Services provided the definition of information to be counted toward the Missouri Automated Child Support System (MACSS), as documented in Appendix C. The work group also provided feedback and recommendations on key issues in the final report.

Missouri circuit court clerical time study.

Ninety-three percent of Missouri's circuit clerk staff took part in the four-week time study conducted between October 6 through the 31st, 2025. Before the time study began, an NCSC consultant conducted 14 one-hour training webinars in the two weeks before the time study to provide detailed instructions on how all participants should track and record their work time. The NCSC also provided written instructions and an online help link for participants who had questions about recording time and categorizing information. During the time study, circuit clerk staff kept records of all time spent on case-related and non-case-specific activities and entered their work time data in NCSC's secure online data entry website. The NCSC provided a weekly participation report to OSCA indicating which participants entered time during that week but did not include any specific time study data entered by them. [1]

Adequacy of Time Survey.

After the time study data collection period, 877 clerical staff members completed an online adequacy of time survey about the sufficiency of time available during regular working hours to do their work. The survey results revealed that most clerical staff believe they "usually" have enough time to handle their daily tasks effectively.[2]

Data analysis and development of preliminary case weights.

NCSC staff analyzed the data collected from the time study and adequacy of time survey then drafted reports, including tables and preliminary case weights for review by the work group.

Focus groups.

In January 2026, NCSC staff conducted six focus groups via WebEx with clerical staff to review the project methodology and discuss the preliminary findings from the time study and adequacy of time survey. To encourage dialogue during the focus groups, OSCA staff did not take part but were provided with summary reports for each group.

---

[1] Additional staff, who occasionally assist with clerical work also tracked the time they spent engaging only in tasks typically conducted by circuit clerk staff. This *ancillary* staff time was used to compute case weights, but the ancillary staff are not included in the participation rate, as they were not expected to record all time every day.

[2] A separate adequacy of time survey was administered to ancillary staff. Of the 95 ancillary staff who participated in the time study, 33 completed the adequacy of time survey.

CWWL Work Group review, discussion, and decision-making.

The NCSC and the work group held additional meetings in January and March 2026 to review the data and make final decisions based on the time study data, adequacy of time survey, and focus group findings.

At the initial review meeting, conducted remotely via Zoom in January 2026, the work group reviewed and discussed the findings from the time study, including preliminary case weights, and results from the adequacy of time survey. They discussed whether the initial case weights and case filings were accurate, given their personal experience. The work group also worked with the NCSC to plan the focus groups.

Following the focus group meetings in January, the NCSC and the work group met again in person on March 5, 2026. This meeting focused on whether to adjust the case weights based on the focus groups and survey findings. The work group agreed to accept the case weights derived from the time study.

Summary of Findings

The final report provides a detailed explanation of each step in the research and data analysis process for this weighted caseload study, as well as the development of the weighted caseload model. The weighted caseload model is sufficiently flexible and provides CCBC with the framework to determine the approximate need for circuit court clerical staff. The report identifies the resources currently being used to process the circuit court workload across the state, allowing OSCA to determine where clerical resources are needed as case filings change over time and how this impacts workload. This facilitates more accurate forecasts of staffing needs and recommendations for future requests for additional resources. Applying the new weighted workload model to average annual filings for calendar years 2023-2025 reveals that Missouri's circuit clerk offices should have 1,718 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff members to handle the current workload effectively.

The NCSC encourages CCBC to consider the following recommendations regarding the ongoing use of the weighted workload model.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1

The NCSC recommends updating the circuit clerk needs model annually by inserting new case filings from the most recent three-year average of reliable filings.

Recommendation 2

The weighted workload model presented in this report should be the starting point for determining the need for clerical staff in the Missouri circuit clerks' offices. There are qualitative issues that an objective weighted workload model cannot account for, such as differences in jury trial rates, possible variations in the proportion of civil and domestic cases involving self-represented parties, differences among counties in the percentage of persons who require court interpreting services (whose hearings require more time), and the need to establish minimum staffing levels to ensure court coverage and customer service needs are met. The CCBC may wish to weigh these qualitative factors when they consider the need to add staff.

Recommendation 3

Over time, the integrity of any weighted caseload model may be affected by external factors such as changes in legislation, case law, legal practice, court technology, and administrative policies. NCSC recommends that OSCA conduct a comprehensive review of the weighted workload model every three to five years. This review should include a time study in which all or most circuit court clerical staff participate. Between updates, if a major change in the law appears to have a significant impact on workload, a quality adjustment panel of experts can be convened to make interim adjustments to the affected case weight(s).

Introduction

Funding bodies and the public increasingly call upon the courts and other government agencies to be more efficient and to operate more like a business. One of the challenges for courts in responding to this demand is determining the appropriate number of judicial officers and court staff required to provide high-quality services in the courts.

Historically, states and local jurisdictions have relied on population-based formulas (e.g., three clerks for one judge), case-filing-based formulas (e.g., one clerk per 500 cases filed, regardless of case type), or a combination of both. However, such formulas only provide rough estimates of clerical workload. Social, demographic, geographic, and economic factors can cause significant variations in the types, number, and proportion of cases filed in a jurisdiction. Simple filings or population-based formulas are insufficient for accurately determining circuit court clerks' needs.

Because of these variations, judiciary leaders and legislatures across the United States are increasingly adopting evidence-based workload assessment models that assign different weights to various case types based on the amount of clerical time needed to handle the cases fairly and efficiently. These research-based models are known as weighted caseload or weighted workload formulas. The National Center for State Courts (NCSC) is a national leader in conducting workload assessments within the judiciary and developing weighted workload formulas to determine the need for judicial officers and court staff, and staff in other justice system agencies throughout the U.S.[3]

Recognizing the utility and need to update the 2023 weighted workload model for the circuit court clerks, the Circuit Court Budget Committee (CCBC) and Office of State Courts Administration (OSCA), sought the assistance of the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) to conduct a weighted workload study to update the existing case weights through the process of a time study in which circuit court clerk staff tracked their time for a four-week period.

A clear measure of circuit court clerical workload is central to determining how many clerical staff are needed to process all cases filed. Adequate resources are essential

[3] During the past ten years, the National Center for State Courts has conducted weighted workload studies for clerical staff in the following states: Alabama, California, Colorado, Kansas, Kentucky, Iowa, Maryland, Michigan, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Oregon, South Dakota, Virginia, and Texas (Harris County). The NCSC has also conducted numerous weighted workload studies for use with judicial officers, other court staff, probation, parole, prosecuting attorneys, and public defenders.

for the circuit court clerks' offices to effectively process court cases without delay while also delivering quality service to the public. Meeting these challenges involves objectively assessing the number of circuit court clerks required to handle the caseload and whether those resources are being distributed appropriately.

Specifically, the current study accomplished the following:

- Utilized a methodology that bases the development of case weights on all work recorded by circuit court clerks for a four-week period,
- Included participation from 93% of circuit court clerk staff,
- Included a four-week data collection period to ensure sufficient data to develop valid case weights,
- Accounted for circuit court clerk work for all phases of case processing,
- Accounted for non-case-related activities that are a normal part of daily work,
- Established a transparent and flexible model to determine the need for circuit court clerks across the state.

This report explains the weighted workload methodology and results in detail and offers recommendations for the ongoing use of the model.

Weighted Workload Overview

The weighted workload method of a workload assessment is grounded in the understanding that different types of court cases vary in complexity and, consequently, in the amount of clerical staff work they generate. For example, a typical felony creates a greater need for clerical staff resources than the average misdemeanor case. Unlike resource allocation methods that are based on population or raw, unweighted caseloads, the weighted workload methodology explicitly incorporates the differences in clerical staff workload associated with different types of cases, producing a more accurate and nuanced profile of the need for clerical staff in the Missouri circuit courts. The weighted workload formula consists of three critical elements:

1. Case filings, which are the number of new cases of each type filed each year (or the average of the most recent three years).
2. Case weights, which represent the average amount of time required to process cases of each type during the course of a year.

3. The year value, which is the amount of time each clerk full-time equivalent (FTE) has available to work in a year.

The total annual workload is calculated by multiplying the three-year annual filings and counts for each case type by the corresponding case weight, then summing the workload across all case types. The clerk offices' workload is then divided by the year value to determine the total number of FTE clerical staff needed to process the annual workload.

This weighted workload study was conducted in two phases:

1. A time study in which all circuit court clerical staff were asked to record all case-related and non-case-related work over a four-week period (October 6-31, 2025).[4] The time study provided an empirical description of the amount of time currently devoted to processing each case type, as well as the division of the workday between case-related and non-case-related activities.
2. A quality adjustment process to ensure that the final weighted caseload model incorporates sufficient time for efficient and effective case processing. The quality adjustment process included:
    - An adequacy of time survey asking circuit court clerical staff[5] about the amount of time currently available to perform their work, including their perceived levels of work-related stress and whether the current pace of work is sustainable,
    - Six focus groups conducted by NCSC, including circuit court clerical staff from across the state, and
    - A review and acceptance of the case weights by the CWWL Work Group and OSCA.

[4] Additional staff, who occasionally assist with clerical work also tracked the time they spent engaging only in tasks typically conducted by circuit clerk staff. This *ancillary* staff time was used to compute case weights, but the ancillary staff are not included in the participation rate, as they were not expected to record all time every day.

[5] Ancillary staff who participated in the time study were also asked to complete the adequacy of time survey as it relates to the clerical work in which they engaged.

Clerical Weighted Workload Work Group

The Clerical Weighted Workload Work Group's role was to advise the NCSC on all the components of the time study. This includes the selection of case types and activities, the time study design, and making policy decisions regarding the development of the case weights and needs model.

The work group, appointed by the Circuit Court Budget Committee, included judges, clerks of court and clerks' office managers, as well as staff from OSCA. The work group included 15 members as well as 5 OSCA staff and the state courts administrator.

The work group initially met on September 31, 2025, to define the parameters of the study. This included identifying which staff should participate, the timeframe during which the data would be collected, the length of time that data needed to be captured, the case types for case weight generation, and the tasks and activities (case-related and non-case-related) that clerical staff perform in and out of court.

During the second meeting, which was held remotely on January 8, 2026, after completion of the work time study and adequacy of time survey, the committee reviewed the preliminary findings presented by NCSC staff. The committee provided valuable feedback that sharpened and improved the data analysis and provided direction for the types of questions to be discussed by focus groups conducted during January 2026.

On March 5, 2026, the work group met in person to review feedback from the focus groups and a more detailed and refined analysis of the work time data and case weights. The committee agreed to accept the case weights derived from the time study.

Work Time Study

Time Study Participants

Figure 1 shows that 93% of all expected circuit court clerical staff (1,692 of 1,813 active and eligible staff) participated in the four-week study of clerical work time, including clerical staff from each of the 114 counties. Identified ancillary staff, those who occasionally perform clerical work (such as bailiffs and judicial assistants) who worked during the four-week study period also participated in the study when they performed clerical work. This strong participation rate assures confidence in the accuracy and validity of the resulting case weights.

FIGURE 1: TIME STUDY PARTICIPATION RATES BY COUNTY

County	Expected (Count)*	Actual	Participation Rate
Adair County	10	9	90%
Andrew County	7	7	100%
Atchison County	3	3	100%
Audrain County	9	9	100%
Barry County	11	11	100%
Barton County	4	4	100%
Bates County	7	7	100%
Benton County	7	5	71%
Bollinger County	4	4	100%
Boone County	48	48	100%
Buchanan County	28	28	100%
Butler County	17	17	100%
Caldwell County	3	3	100%
Callaway County	13	11	85%
Camden County	19	18	95%
Cape Girardeau County	23	23	100%
Carroll County	4	4	100%
Carter County	5	5	100%
Cass County	28	27	96%
Cedar County	4	4	100%
Chariton County	3	3	100%
Christian County	24	21	88%
Clark County	4	3	75%
Clay County	48	47	98%
Clinton County	6	5	83%
Cole County	24	22	92%
Cooper County	7	7	100%
Crawford County	14	14	100%
Dade County	3	3	100%
Dallas County	4	4	100%
Daviess County	4	4	100%
Dekalb County	4	4	100%
Dent County	7	7	100%
Douglas County	5	5	100%
Dunklin County	13	13	100%
Franklin County	28	28	100%
Gasconade County	5	5	100%
Gentry County	5	5	100%
Greene County	82	76	93%
Grundy County	4	4	100%
Harrison County	4	4	100%
Henry County	9	9	100%
Hickory County	3	3	100%
Holt County	3	3	100%
Howard County	3	3	100%
Howell County	16	15	94%
Iron County	4	4	100%
Jackson County	203	175	86%
Jasper County	36	34	94%
Jefferson County	57	52	91%
Johnson County	13	12	92%
Knox County	4	3	75%
Laclede County	13	13	100%
Lafayette County	8	8	100%
Lawrence County	11	11	100%
Lewis County	3	3	100%
Lincoln County	16	16	100%
Linn County	6	6	100%

County	Expected (Count)	Actual	Participation Rate
Livingston County	7	6	86%
Macon County	5	4	80%
Madison County	7	5	71%
Maries County	4	4	100%
Marion County	12	11	92%
McDonald County	8	8	100%
Mercer County	3	3	100%
Miller County	10	10	100%
Mississippi County	7	7	100%
Moniteau County	5	5	100%
Monroe County	3	3	100%
Montgomery County	6	6	100%
Morgan County	7	6	86%
New Madrid County	9	9	100%
Newton County	17	15	88%
Nodaway County	5	5	100%
Oregon County	4	4	100%
Osage County	3	3	100%
Ozark County	4	4	100%
Pemiscot County	9	9	100%
Perry County	6	6	100%
Pettis County	17	16	94%
Phelps County	19	16	84%
Pike County	9	9	100%
Platte County	28	25	89%
Polk County	10	10	100%
Pulaski County	23	21	91%
Putnam County	5	3	60%
Ralls County	6	4	67%
Randolph County	12	8	67%
Ray County	9	9	100%
Reynolds County	3	3	100%
Ripley County	5	5	100%
Saline County	8	7	88%
Schuyler County	4	4	100%
Scotland County	3	3	100%
Scott County	14	14	100%
Shannon County	4	4	100%
Shelby County	3	3	100%
St Charles County	65	61	94%
St Clair County	4	4	100%
St Francois County	19	18	95%
St Louis City	122	119	98%
St Louis County	201	180	90%
Ste Genevieve County	7	7	100%
Stoddard County	13	11	85%
Stone County	12	11	92%
Sullivan County	3	3	100%
Taney County	21	20	95%
Texas County	8	8	100%
Vernon County	8	8	100%
Warren County	10	10	100%
Washington County	11	11	100%
Wayne County	6	6	100%
Webster County	10	8	80%
Worth County	2	2	100%
Wright County	8	7	88%
Total	**1,813**	**1,692**	**93%**

*Expected count is based on the number of staff employed and expected to work during the time study period.

Preparation for the Work Time Study

To maximize data quality, all time study participants were asked to attend a webinar training module explaining how to categorize and record their time. NCSC consultants provided 14 webinar-based training sessions between September 22 and October 2, 2025. In addition to the live training sessions, participants were provided with a recording of the training webinar and reference materials. Additionally, a help desk link was available on the online data collection tool, allowing time study participants to ask questions as needed. The web-based data collection instrument allowed time study participants to verify that their data was accurately entered and permitted real-time monitoring of participation rates, helping to maximize the quality and completeness of the time study data.

Work Time Data Collection Process

During the four weeks between October 6 - 31, 2025, participating staff were asked to track their time each day by case type category and case-specific activity or by a non-case-related activity to measure current practice. Participants were instructed to record all working time, including time spent outside of regular working hours, if applicable, and all non-case-related work. Participants tracked their time in as little as five-minute increments using a web-based data entry form.

Once submitted, the data were automatically entered into NCSC's secure database, which was accessible only to NCSC staff who analyzed the data. Collecting data from staff across the state ensured that sufficient data were collected to provide an accurate average of case processing practices and times for all case types included in the study.

The work time study employed an event-based methodology, which allows analysts to collect data from a four-week period and translate that data into an annual representation of judicial officer work. (See Appendix A for a detailed description of this methodology.)

Data Elements in the Clerical Work Time Study

At the work group's first meeting in September 2025, one of the group's primary tasks was to establish the case type categories and activities upon which to base the time study. The case types, case-related activities, and non-case-related activities describe all the work required and expected of circuit clerk offices in Missouri.

Case Type Categories

Understanding the average time spent on various case types helps the NCSC and the work group determine the clerical staffing needs based on the number and complexity of cases. Creating accurate case type categories is crucial because it mirrors how cases are processed and counted in Missouri.

These case type categories must satisfy the following requirements:

- The case type categories are both mutually exclusive and collectively exhaustive, meaning that any given case falls into one, and only one, case type category.
- The categories are logically distinct.
- There are meaningful differences among categories in the amount of clerical staff work required to process the average case.
- There are enough case filings within each category to develop a valid case weight.
- Filings for each case type category or its component case types are tracked consistently and reliably by OSCA.
- The work group defined the 24 case type categories shown in Figure 2. A more detailed description of the case types can be found in Appendix B.

FIGURE 2: CASE- TYPE CATEGORIES & ANNUAL FILINGS

Case Type	3-Year Average Number of Filings CY2022-24	Percent of Total Filings
General Circuit Civil	36,442	3.7%
Civil Expungements	6,808	0.7%
Time Intensive Circuit Civil/Sexual Predator/ Personal injury	546	0.1%
Asbestos	170	0.0%
Simple Circuit Civil	87,363	8.8%
Domestic Relations	36,972	3.7%
Protection Order	52,786	5.3%
Associate Civil	183,802	18.6%
Small Claims	5,900	0.6%
Garnishment and Execution	109,635	11.1%
Adoption	2,860	0.3%
Abuse & Neglect/Termination of Parental Rights	6,898	0.7%
Juvenile Delinquency/Status Offense	2,753	0.3%
Circuit Felony	42,506	4.3%
Associate Felony	51,162	5.2%
Misdemeanor/Muni Cert./Trial de Novo/Municipal & County Ordinance Drug & Alcohol	78,316	7.9%
Traffic/Watercraft/Conservation/Municipal & County Ordinance & Traffic	233,128	23.5%
Decedent Estate	5,981	0.6%
Incapacitated/Minor Estate	6,591	0.7%
Simple Probate	13,745	1.4%
Involuntary Detention Petition	2,507	0.3%
Application for 96 Hour Detention	16,029	1.6%
Treatment Court	2,414	0.2%
Passport Issuance	4,793	0.5%
Total	990,107	100%

Clerical Work Activity Types

Circuit Court clerk staff perform a variety of functions in and out of court that can be directly related to the processing of cases (case-related activities), as well as non-case-specific work. NCSC staff worked closely with the CWWL Work Group to develop a comprehensive list and description of these essential activities. The list of activities served as an organizing tool to guide data collection during the time study. It should be noted that the Department of Social Services provided the definition of information

to be counted toward the Missouri Automated Child Support System (MACSS). A list of case-related activities is provided in Figure 3, with a more detailed description in Appendix C.

Work that is not related to a particular case is also an essential part of the clerical workday. To compile a detailed profile of non-case-related activities and provide an empirical basis for constructing the day and year values, the work group identified and defined a comprehensive list of non-case-related activities, which are provided in Figure 4 and provided with expanded detail in Appendix D. The Circuit Court Budget Committee (CCBC) specifically requested that the Recorder of Deeds time be captured in this study as a non-case related activity to determine the impact to those counties with dual office holders (Circuit Clerk and Recorder of Deeds).

FIGURE 3: CASE-RELATED ACTIVITIES

Case Document Processing
Entering Data into MACSS
Calendaring
Response to Requests from Public
After Hours and Weekend (Emergency) Casework
Self-Represented Litigant Assistance
Courtroom Duties

FIGURE 4: NON-CASE-RELATED ACTIVITIES

General Customer Service
Financial Processing (Includes Jury Services)
Clerk of Court Office Duties and Supervision
Clerk of Court Day-to-Day Management
Recorder of Deed Time
Clerk of Court Office Management
Community Activities
Clerk of Court Staff Receiving Training and Staff Development
Work-Related Travel & Committee Attendance
Vacation/Sick/Other Leave
Time Study Data Recording and Entry

Work Time by Case and Activity Types

Figure 5 presents a detailed picture of the percentage of case-related time clerks spend on various cases statewide. Perhaps not surprisingly, the most significant amount of clerical staff time is spent on general circuit civil cases (15.3%), followed by circuit felony cases (13.5%), and associate civil cases (11.8%). In terms of case-related activities, the greatest proportion of time for all case types is spent on case document processing (72.8%), followed by courtroom duties (12.7%).

FIGURE 5: PERCENTAGE OF CLERK TIME REPORTED BY CASE TYPE AND CASE RELATED EVENT DURING TIME STUDY

Case Type	Case Document Processing	Entering Data into MACSS	Calendaring	Response to Requests from Public	After Hours and Weekend (Emergency) Casework	SRL Assistance	Courtroom Duties	Total % of Time by Case Type
General Circuit Civil	10.7%	0.4%	0.6%	1.2%	0.0%	0.6%	1.8%	15.3%
Civil Expungements	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%
Time Intensive Circuit Civil/Sexual Predator/ Personal Injury	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%
Asbestos	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%
Simple Circuit Civil	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	1.1%
Domestic Relations	5.7%	0.6%	0.4%	0.7%	0.0%	0.8%	1.3%	9.5%
Protection Order	4.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%	0.5%	0.7%	5.7%
Associate Civil	9.5%	0.0%	0.5%	0.3%	0.0%	0.3%	1.3%	11.8%
Small Claims	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.8%
Garnishment and Execution	4.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	4.6%
Adoption	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%
Abuse & Neglect/Termination of Parental Rights	2.3%	0.0%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	3.1%
Juvenile Delinquency/Status Offense	1.2%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	1.7%
Circuit Felony	9.1%	0.0%	1.2%	0.5%	0.1%	0.0%	2.7%	13.5%
Associate Felony	5.4%	0.0%	0.6%	0.3%	0.1%	0.0%	1.3%	7.7%
Misdemeanor/Muni Cert./Trial de Novo/Municipal & County Ordinance Drug & Alcohol	4.7%	0.0%	0.5%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%	6.7%
Traffic/Watercraft/Conservation/Municipal & County Ordinance & Traffic	4.5%	0.0%	0.4%	0.6%	0.0%	0.1%	0.6%	6.3%
Decedent Estate	2.4%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	2.8%
Incapacitated/Minor Estate	3.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	3.5%
Simple Probate	2.2%	0.0%	0.1%	0.2%	0.0%	0.1%	0.2%	2.9%
Involuntary Detention Petition	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%
Application for 96 Hour Detention	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%
Treatment Court	0.7%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	1.1%
Passport Issuance	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%
Total Percent per Activity	72.8%	1.1%	5.2%	5.0%	0.3%	3.0%	12.7%	100.0%

Distinguishing Caseload and Workload

Comparing the number of filings for each case type with the percentage of time spent on each case type reveals the utility of the weighted caseload methodology. As previously shown in Figure 2, filings for Traffic/Watercraft/Conservation/Municipal & County Ordinance & Traffic cases represent the highest proportion of cases filed (23.5%). In contrast, Figure 5 reveals that circuit clerks collectively spend 6.3% of

their case-related time on those cases. Conversely, general circuit civil cases make up 3.7% of filings, but take the greatest amount of clerks' time, collectively (15.3%). Clearly, caseload is not the same as workload.

The weighted caseload model is based on a uniform amount of time Circuit Court clerks have available to perform all their work annually, including both case-related and non-case-related tasks. To determine clerical staffing needs, the average amount of time spent on non-case-related activities is held constant, and the remainder of time available is calculated to determine the average amount of time available for clerical staff to perform case-related work. This is a critical component of the weighted caseload model, so knowing how much time is spent on both case-related and non-case-related work is essential.

Caseload Data

To translate the time study data into the average amount of time spent on each type of case (preliminary case weights), it is first necessary to determine the average number of cases of each type filed over the most recent three-year period. OSCA provided filing data for calendar years 2022 through 2024 for each of the case type categories. The caseload data for those years were then averaged to provide an average annual count of filings within each case type category. Using an annual average rather than the caseload data for a single year minimizes the potential for any temporary fluctuations in caseloads to influence the case weights.

Preliminary Case Weights

Following the data collection period, the time study and caseload data were used to calculate preliminary case weights. A preliminary case weight represents the average amount of time clerical staff currently spend processing a case of a particular type during a year. The use of separate case weights for each case type category accounts for the fact that cases of varying levels of complexity require different amounts of case processing time. As indicated above, the weighted workload formula accounts for the fact that case types vary in complexity and require different amounts of clerical staff time and attention. Relying solely on the sheer number of cases to assess the demands placed on clerical staff ignores the varying levels of resources needed to process different types of cases, as revealed by comparing the distribution of cases and clerical staff time expenditures in Figures 2 and 5.

The preliminary case weights were calculated by: (1) adding all time spent by Circuit Court clerical staff on each case type during the four-week data collection period (19

working days),[6] (2) dividing the total amount of time for each case type by 19 (the number of working days in the time study), to determine the average daily amount of work time, (3) multiplying the daily average time by the number of days Circuit Court clerical staff are expected to work in a year (the year value of 218), which yields the annual amount of work time on each case type, and (4) dividing the annual work time by the number of cases filed for each case type during the most recent and representative 3-year average of filings (CY 2022, 2023, and 2024). This result provides a picture of the average amount of case-related time currently spent by all Circuit Court clerical staff in Missouri on each of the identified case types. Figure 6 illustrates the calculations used to determine the preliminary case weight for general circuit civil cases.

FIGURE 6: CALCULATING ANNUALIZED MINUTES & PRELIMINARY CASE WEIGHT FOR GENERAL CIRCUIT CIVIL CASES

Computing the Annualized Minutes per Case Type

General Circuit Civil Cases - Total minutes recorded during data collection period	1,893,084
Divide by	÷
Working days during data collection period	19
Equals	=
Average daily minutes spent working on General Circuit Civil cases statewide	99,636
Multiply by	x
Clerical staff working days per year	218
Equals	=
Annualized minutes spent working on General Circuit Civil cases	21,720,650

Computing the Preliminary Case Weight

Annualized minutes spent working on General Circuit Civil cases	21,720,650
Divide by	÷
3-Year average filings	36,422
Equals	=
Preliminary case weight in minutes	596

[6] The time study occurred during the four-week period of October 6 through October 31, 2025. Columbus Day, which is a state-observed holiday, fell on October 13, so the total number of working weekdays during the study period was 19.

Circuit Court clerical staff spend a combined total of 21,720,643 minutes of case-related time on general circuit civil cases annually. Dividing that time by the 3-year average number of general circuit civil cases filed (36,422) yields a preliminary case weight of 596 minutes. Figure 7 shows the complete set of preliminary case weights for Circuit Court clerical staff.

FIGURE 7: PRELIMINARY CASE WEIGHTS

Case Type	Preliminary Case Weight
General Circuit Civil	596*
Civil Expungements	53
Time Intensive Circuit Civil/Sexual Predator/ Personal injury	573
Asbestos	2,647
Simple Circuit Civil	17
Domestic Relations	366
Protection Order	152
Associate Civil	91
Small Claims	204
Garnishment and Execution	60
Adoption	161
Abuse & Neglect/Termination of Parental Rights	634
Juvenile Delinquency/Status Offense	867
Circuit Felony	449
Associate Felony	212
Misdemeanor/Muni Cert./Trial de Novo/Municipal & County Ordinance Drug & Alcohol	120
Traffic/Watercraft/Conservation/Municipal & County Ordinance & Traffic	38
Decedent Estate	682
Incapacitated/Minor Estate	754
Simple Probate	303
Involuntary Detention Petition	130
Application for 96 Hour Detention	38
Treatment Court	665
Passport Issuance	36

Special Analysis

As noted previously in this report, the CCBC specifically requested that the work group include the activity of "Time Spent on Recorder of Deeds" to determine the staffing time required to attend to this work in counties in which the clerk is a dual officeholder of both

the Circuit Clerk and Recorder of Deeds. Sixteen counties have Circuit Clerks who hold this dual role, including: Carroll, Chariton, Clinton, Gasconade, Gentry, Grundy, Harrison, Hot, Howard, Maries, Mercer, Moniteau, Ozark, Pulaski, Ralls, and Shannon Counties. For the 16 counties in which this situation occurs. Combined, the time associated with this work in those counties, when annualized, amounts to 743,822 minutes. Dividing that time by the year value of 85,020 minutes, it requires 8.74 FTE to attend to recorder of deed work annually in those 16 counties.

Qualitative Feedback

To obtain a better understanding of the current working conditions and experiences of circuit court clerical staff, NCSC staff obtained qualitative data through the use of an adequacy of time survey and focus group sessions. The information obtained through both of these efforts is summarized below.

Adequacy of Time (AOT) Survey and Focus Groups

Two surveys were sent out to obtain feedback from all staff who participated in the time study. All circuit court clerical staff were asked to complete a web-based adequacy of time (AOT) survey immediately following the time study (primary time study participants); separately, the same survey link was sent to all ancillary time study participants. Separate surveys were sent to each of the two groups of time study participants to determine if and how their responses varied. Given that the survey is designed primarily to describe clerical work and working experiences, the survey results provided by ancillary staff do not speak to these issues and are not included in this review. Survey respondents were asked to answer several questions related to the data collection period and their current workload. Just over half of the primary time study participants (51.8%) participated in the adequacy of time survey, and just over one-third of the ancillary participants engaged in the survey (34.7%). Some of the responses from the AOT survey are reported in tandem with the focus group findings in the discussion below; Appendix E provides the full survey results in detail.

To understand court clerks' perspectives on their work and their experiences of the time study, the NCSC held six focus groups during the last two weeks of January. Two

focus groups each were held with clerks from small, medium, and large counties.[7] Each group included between 2-10 participants who work in various clerk's offices across the state. Participants also shared insights about their work experiences, including how certain factors impact case processing times and barriers to productivity they experience. The focus groups also gave the NCSC an opportunity to explain the resource allocation model and gather feedback on whether the data collection period, case filings, and reported workload were representative of a typical four-week period.

Participants generally agreed that October was representative of clerks' typical activities. Most clerks reported they were "accurate enough" in tracking their time, even though some reconstruction of busy days occurred. Review of the week that included Missouri Judicial College found no discernible difference in case processing times compared with the other study weeks, suggesting that the event did not materially bias the overall time measures.

However, several limitations affect how fully the study captured routine clerical work. Clerks who work in shared queues often handle multiple case types in a single interaction and found it difficult to separate those activities when logging time. Although clerks were instructed to either split time between case types or record the case type consuming the majority of the time, that approach introduces inconsistency and potential measurement error. In addition, busy days sometimes required staff to recreate their day after the fact, creating recall bias that reduces minute-level accuracy even when overall tracking felt adequate.

Adequacy of time survey findings support the focus group participants' perception of the representativeness of the time study period. Eighty-one percent of respondents indicated that October was reflective of their work. Half of those who reported the time period was not representative cited being on vacation or out due to illness as the reason. These absences are to be expected and are addressed analytically, so they do not pose a concern on data integrity. Other respondents cited having either a higher or lower than normal workload, which is to be expected in a four-week statewide study and likely reflects typical work fluctuation. Approximately one-third of those who said the timeframe was not typical cited judges being gone as the primary reason; as noted above, data analysis indicated this did not have a measurable impact on workload.

Since the prior 2023 study, the most significant processing change reported across focus groups is the migration from the legacy case management system (JIS) to

[7] County size designations were defined by population. Small counties were defined as having a population between 1-25,000, medium between 25,001-79,999, and large counties defined as those with a population 80,000 or more. A map was attached to the focus group invitation with the county sizes defined.

Show-Me Courts (SMC). Clerks described a steep learning curve, intermittent bugs, and sluggish performance during rollout—factors that could have increased processing times during the study period. Other changes noted include updates to passport application procedures and greater complexity in applications for 96-hour holds, driven by more requests involving mental health or substance-use issues.

Regarding documentation of MACSS entries, a few participants reported using the FMACS docket code during the study, but most said they had only recently become aware of that code. This suggests FMACS was underused or inconsistently applied during the time study, so MACSS-related activity may be undercounted in the data.

Technology and system performance had a measurable impact on workflow, with the effect varying by county size. All participants reported SMC ran slowly during the study; although performance has improved in some places, issues like lags, buffering, timeouts, and frequent reboots persist. Medium-sized counties reported they are provided with regional tech support, rather than full-time onsite tech support, so clerks often serve as de facto day-to-day tech support for WebEx remote hearings, printers, and language-line use. Smaller counties reported slow or spotty internet, which can cause SMC timeouts and directly lengthen case processing times.

Similar frustrations regarding the use of technology were raised in the AOT. Widespread issues with Show Me Courts (SMC), Case.Net, phone systems, and slow or unstable computers were identified as major obstacles. Staff reported frequent system crashes, forced logouts, slow loading times, missing or changing codes, and unannounced system updates. These problems cause delays, rework, frustration, and place clerks in the role of de facto IT support during court operations.

Staff turnover and vacancies were widespread concerns across focus groups. When positions are vacant, remaining staff must absorb additional duties, reducing time for regular processing and quality-control activities. Hiring and onboarding require significant staff time—one-on-one training for new hires can last weeks or months—and retirements of long-serving employees have left gaps in institutional knowledge. Low clerical pay was frequently cited as a barrier to hiring and retention, although a few smaller counties reported lower turnover and greater job stability.

Concerns around staff turnover were also raised in the AOT. AOT respondents consistently reported insufficient staffing levels, with vacant positions, high turnover, and uneven workload distribution placing sustained pressure on a small number of employees. Many indicated they routinely work well beyond normal hours, including weekends and holidays, to keep operations functioning. Short staffing also forces clerks to cover multiple roles simultaneously, limiting their ability to complete core duties adequately.

AOT respondents widely expressed that pay does not reflect the complexity, responsibility, or legal knowledge required for their roles. Clerks routinely correct attorneys, interpret statutes, and manage complex legal processes, yet compensation lags behind comparable positions. Rising cost of living and limited performance-based incentives further exacerbate dissatisfaction and turnover.

Self-represented litigants (SRLs) were commonly reported to increase processing time. Because clerks cannot provide legal advice, they spend extra time explaining procedures, reviewing and correcting forms, and manually scanning or entering paper filings into SMC since SRLs typically do not e-file. Handwriting legibility and form errors further slow processing. SRLs are most common in domestic/dissolution cases, protection orders, small claims, landlord/tenant matters, and small estates.

A substantial number of clerks reported that cases involving SRLs, were cited as extremely time intensive. SRLs require substantial explanation, guidance, and follow-up, often diverting staff from other responsibilities. Some staff noted that case volume is compounded by systemic factors beyond their control, increasing processing demands.

Training needs and delivery preferences varied. All participants emphasized the importance of ongoing training but differed on format: some preferred more online options for flexibility, while others found online training too interruptible and desired more in-person, hands-on sessions. Practical constraints—difficulty sending multiple staff to offsite training, long travel times, and the need to cover duties while staff are away—limit participation. Several clerks expressed a desire to provide local training but said they lack the time to develop and deliver it.

Many AOT respondents described being "thrown into" new roles or systems with limited hands-on training and incomplete or hard-to-navigate materials. They emphasized that training is difficult to attend due to staffing shortages and court schedules, and that materials become outdated quickly as laws and system functions change. Several asked for more structured, frequent training and clearer, consistent instructions that don't change after months of following prior guidance.

In summary, the time study captured many typical clerical activities and benefited from participant confidence that October was a representative sample of four weeks of their work. Still, multitasking, recall-based logging on busy days, the SMC transition and its performance issues, local technology differences, staffing turnover, and rising case complexity are problems experienced by clerks that all have impacts on case processing times.

CWWL Work Group Case Weights & Qualitative Data Review

After completing the time study, the adequacy of time survey, and the focus group discussions, NCSC staff held a final meeting with the CWWL Work Group on March 5, 2026. Work group members reviewed the materials prepared by NCSC staff, which summarized findings from the time study and the qualitative input from the adequacy of time survey and focus.

Compared to the 2023 study, sixteen case weights decreased, seven increased, and one remained the same. Although the number of decreases was unexpected, the work group accepted the final case weights as derived from the data, with one exception: the case weight for general circuit civil cases.

The work group needed to decide how to handle a large number of general circuit civil cases filed against the agrochemical company Monsanto concerning the herbicide Roundup to be included in the needs model. A keyword search for "Monsanto" in all general circuit civil cases filed in Missouri during CY 2023-2025 identified 37,727 cases. Of these, 88% (33,225 cases) were filed in Cole County, 10% (3,853 cases) were filed in St. Louis County, 1.6% (602) were filed in the City of St. Louis. There were 47 cases filed across 20 other counties. The search may also have captured cases in which "Monsanto" is a litigant's surname.

After substantial discussion, the work group agreed to exclude the Monsanto cases filed in Cole County from the average number of filings to compute the general circuit civil case weight and to derive staffing needs. Cases from all other counties remained included in the averages. The work group cited several reasons for this decision:

- Cole County received a new judge and requested replacing a clerical position with that of a judicial assistant to help process the increased filings.
- Other counties with Monsanto-related filings have not made similar provisions; the work group was concerned those locations would be disadvantaged if the Cole County surge were excluded from statewide averages.
- OSCA's Information Technology Division developed keystroke shortcuts for Monsanto cases that streamline some of the work.

- A lawsuit pending before the U.S. Supreme Court could, depending on the outcome, transfer jurisdiction of these cases to federal court.

Based on the work group's decision, the case weight for general circuit civil cases, excluding those filed in Cole County during the three-year period is 596 minutes per case. When all Monsanto cases are included, the case weight is 475 per case. The work group suggested that, if appropriate, the CCBC could apply the lower case weight of 475 to the Monsanto cases to determine staffing needs for that subset of cases. The final case weights for all case types are presented in Figure 8 below.

FIGURE 8: FINAL CASE WEIGHTS (MINUTES)

Case Type	Final Case Weight
General Circuit Civil	596*
Civil Expungements	53
Time Intensive Circuit Civil/Sexual Predator/ Personal injury	573
Asbestos	2,647
Simple Circuit Civil	17
Domestic Relations	366
Protection Order	152
Associate Civil	91
Small Claims	204
Garnishment and Execution	60
Adoption	161
Abuse & Neglect/Termination of Parental Rights	634
Juvenile Delinquency/Status Offense	867
Circuit Felony	449
Associate Felony	212
Misdemeanor/Muni Cert./Trial de Novo/Municipal & County Ordinance Drug & Alcohol	120
Traffic/Watercraft/Conservation/Municipal & County Ordinance & Traffic	38
Decedent Estate	682
Incapacitated/Minor Estate	754
Simple Probate	303
Involuntary Detention Petition	130
Application for 96 Hour Detention	38
Treatment Court	665
Passport Issuance	36

Calculating the Clerical Work Year and Day

In the weighted workload model, three factors contribute to the calculation of clerical staff resource need: caseload data (case filings), case weights, and clerical staff year value. The year value is equal to the amount of time each full-time clerk has available for case-related work on an annual basis. The relationship of these elements is expressed as follows in Figure 9.

FIGURE 9: CLERICAL STAFF NEEDS MODEL COMPUTATION

$$\frac{\text{Case Filings x Case Weights (minutes)}}{\text{Year Value (minutes)}} = \text{Resource Need (FTE)}$$

Multiplying the filings by the corresponding case weights results in the total annual workload in minutes. Dividing the workload by the year value yields the total number of full-time equivalent (FTE) clerks needed to handle the workload.

Clerk Year and Day Values

To develop the working year values, it was necessary to determine the number of days each clerk has available to work in a year (clerk year), as well as how to divide the workday between case-related and non-case-related work (clerk day value).

As shown in Figure 10, the clerk year value was constructed by beginning with 365 days per year, then subtracting weekends, holidays, training and education, and annual/sick leave. The resulting year value is 218 working days per year (104,640 minutes annually).

FIGURE 10: CLERK YEAR VALUE

Clerk Year Value	Days	Minutes
Total Days per Year	**365**	175,200
Subtract *Non-Working Days:*		
Weekends	-104	-49,920
Holidays	-13	-6,240
Annual & Other leave	-15	-7,200
Sick leave	-10	-4,800
Training & staff development	-5	-2,400
Total Available Workdays per Year	**218**	**104,640**

The clerk day value represents the amount of time each clerk has available for case-related work and non-case-related work each day. The day value is calculated by subtracting time for lunch, breaks, and non-case-related work (e.g., administration, travel, committee work, etc.) from the total 8-hour working day.

Time study data indicated that the clerks spend an average of 90 minutes per day on non-case-related work, such as providing general customer service, attending

meetings, addressing local issues, and administrative issues, so their case-related day equates to approximately 6.5 hours (390 minutes per day).

FIGURE 11. CLERK CASE-SPECIFIC YEAR VALUE

Clerk Year (days)		Case-Specific Clerk Day (hours)		Minutes per Hour		Year Value (minutes)
218	x	6.5	x	60	=	85,020

To calculate the final year value for case-related work, the number of days in the working year was multiplied by the day value for case-related work. This figure is then expressed in terms of minutes per year. Figure 11 shows the calculation of the case-specific year value.

Applying the computation shown in Figure 12 below (clerical staff needs model), the staffing needs model indicates a total need for **1,718 FTE** clerks across the state.[8]

[8] Please note that locations showing as overstaffed are represented by a negative number (and highlighted in pink) in the "Difference Between Current Allocation and Demand Columns" in Figure 12. The total need accounts for both over- and under-staffing.

FIGURE 12: STATEWIDE CLERK NEEDS MODEL SUMMARY

County	Staff Demand (FTE)	Allocated Clerical Staff (includes vacancies)	Difference Between Current Allocation and Demand	Positive Need Only
Adair	7.47	8.36	-0.90	0.00
Andrew	4.08	4.75	-0.67	0.00
Atchison	1.29	3.00	-1.71	0.00
Audrain	7.27	8.00	-0.73	0.00
Barry	9.68	11.00	-1.32	0.00
Barton	3.05	3.65	-0.60	0.00
Bates	5.69	6.50	-0.81	0.00
Benton	5.79	6.00	-0.21	0.00
Bollinger	2.45	3.00	-0.55	0.00
Boone	47.42	46.00	1.42	1.42
Buchanan	25.65	25.50	0.15	0.15
Butler	17.41	19.00	-1.59	0.00
Caldwell	2.67	3.00	-0.33	0.00
Callaway	13.35	14.75	-1.40	0.00
Camden	14.17	15.50	-1.33	0.00
Cape Girardeau	21.83	22.75	-0.92	0.00
Carroll	2.08	2.80	-0.72	0.00
Carter	2.94	3.50	-0.56	0.00
Cass	22.32	23.00	-0.68	0.00
Cedar	3.44	4.00	-0.56	0.00
Chariton	1.86	2.80	-0.94	0.00
Christian	21.63	22.50	-0.87	0.00
Clark	2.93	3.75	-0.82	0.00
Clay	51.61	49.75	1.86	1.86
Clinton	4.99	5.75	-0.76	0.00
Cole	25.38	27.50	-2.12	0.00
Cooper	6.30	7.50	-1.20	0.00
Crawford	9.63	11.00	-1.37	0.00
Dade	1.63	3.00	-1.37	0.00
Dallas	4.00	4.50	-0.50	0.00
Daviess	2.54	3.00	-0.46	0.00
DeKalb	2.44	3.00	-0.56	0.00
Dent	4.35	6.00	-1.65	0.00
Douglas	4.82	5.00	-0.18	0.00
Dunklin	14.20	15.75	-1.55	0.00
Franklin	27.20	29.00	-1.80	0.00
Gasconade	3.86	3.80	0.06	0.06
Gentry	1.62	2.80	-1.18	0.00
Greene	74.13	76.00	-1.87	0.00
Grundy	2.38	3.45	-1.07	0.00
Harrison	4.04	4.00	0.04	0.04
Henry	7.53	8.00	-0.47	0.00
Hickory	1.94	3.00	-1.06	0.00
Holt	1.62	2.80	-1.18	0.00
Howard	2.63	2.95	-0.32	0.00
Howell	13.94	14.50	-0.56	0.00
Iron	2.94	3.65	-0.71	0.00
Jackson	168.57	167.25	1.32	1.32
Jasper	33.78	35.75	-1.97	0.00
Jefferson	53.72	53.50	0.22	0.22
Johnson	13.68	12.75	0.93	0.93
Knox	0.87	3.00	-2.13	0.00
Laclede	11.27	12.00	-0.73	0.00
Lafayette	9.94	10.75	-0.81	0.00
Lawrence	11.65	12.25	-0.60	0.00
Lewis	2.87	3.00	-0.13	0.00
Lincoln	14.44	15.25	-0.81	0.00
Linn	4.47	5.50	-1.03	0.00

County	Staff Demand (FTE)	Allocated Clerical Staff (includes vacancies)	Difference Between Current Allocation and Demand	Positive Need Only
Livingston	4.85	5.50	-0.65	0.00
Macon	4.55	5.00	-0.45	0.00
Madison	5.12	6.50	-1.38	0.00
Maries	2.28	2.80	-0.52	0.00
Marion	10.79	11.50	-0.71	0.00
McDonald	7.14	8.00	-0.86	0.00
Mercer	0.69	2.80	-2.11	0.00
Miller	8.09	9.00	-0.91	0.00
Mississippi	4.95	6.00	-1.05	0.00
Moniteau	3.16	3.80	-0.64	0.00
Monroe	2.11	3.00	-0.89	0.00
Montgomery	4.47	5.00	-0.53	0.00
Morgan	6.72	6.75	-0.03	0.00
New Madrid	6.83	8.80	-1.97	0.00
Newton	18.88	19.00	-0.12	0.00
Nodaway	4.61	5.00	-0.39	0.00
Oregon	2.60	3.50	-0.90	0.00
Osage	2.84	3.00	-0.16	0.00
Ozark	3.03	3.30	-0.27	0.00
Pemiscot	7.82	9.00	-1.18	0.00
Perry	4.36	5.75	-1.39	0.00
Pettis	15.37	16.25	-0.88	0.00
Phelps	14.68	16.50	-1.82	0.00
Pike	5.68	6.85	-1.17	0.00
Platte	25.03	26.75	-1.72	0.00
* Polk	8.02	9.00	-0.98	0.00
Pulaski	17.24	17.55	-0.31	0.00
Putnam	1.18	3.00	-1.82	0.00
Ralls	2.92	3.50	-0.58	0.00
Randolph	10.36	11.50	-1.14	0.00
Ray	5.98	6.50	-0.52	0.00
Reynolds	2.03	3.00	-0.97	0.00
Ripley	4.80	5.00	-0.20	0.00
Saline	6.41	7.00	-0.59	0.00
Schuyler	1.19	3.00	-1.81	0.00
Scotland	0.75	3.00	-2.25	0.00
Scott	12.78	14.50	-1.72	0.00
Shannon	2.73	3.00	-0.27	0.00
Shelby	2.11	3.00	-0.89	0.00
St. Charles	72.45	64.25	8.20	8.20
St. Clair	3.76	4.00	-0.24	0.00
St. Francois	18.46	19.00	-0.54	0.00
St. Louis City	169.31	138.50	30.81	30.81
St. Louis County	245.66	196.50	49.16	49.16
Ste. Genevieve	6.07	7.00	-0.93	0.00
Stoddard	10.61	12.50	-1.89	0.00
Stone	10.58	10.50	0.08	0.08
Sullivan	2.01	3.00	-0.99	0.00
Taney	19.69	19.50	0.19	0.19
Texas	6.81	7.65	-0.84	0.00
Vernon	7.00	7.80	-0.80	0.00
Warren	10.07	10.50	-0.43	0.00
Washington	8.84	9.00	-0.16	0.00
Wayne	4.59	5.50	-0.91	0.00
Webster	9.47	10.00	-0.53	0.00
Worth	0.49	3.00	-2.51	0.00
Wright	7.58	8.50	-0.92	0.00
State Total	1716.07	1718.41	-2.34	94.44

Recommendations

The final staffing needs model is based on the average number of cases filed between calendar years 2023 and 2025, and case weights derived from the time study conducted in October 2025. The numbers were reviewed, vetted, and validated by the CWWL work group. The NCSC encourages the CCBC to consider the following recommendations regarding the ongoing use of the weighted caseload model.

Recommendation 1

The NCSC recommends updating the clerical needs assessment model annually, using case filings from the most recent three-year average number of reliable filings.

Recommendation 2

The workload model presented in this report should be the starting point for determining the need for clerks in each county. There are some key factors that are not directly accounted for in this weighted caseload model including, but not limited to: differences in jury trial rates, possible variations in the proportion of civil and domestic cases involving self-represented parties, differences among counties in the percentage of persons who require court interpreting services (whose hearings require more time), and the need to establish minimum staffing levels to ensure court coverage and customer service needs are met. The CCBC may wish to weigh these qualitative factors when they consider the need to add staff.

Recommendation 3

Over time, the integrity of any weighted caseload model may be affected by external factors such as changes in legislation, case law, legal practice, court technology, and administrative policies. NCSC recommends that the CCBC conduct a comprehensive review of the weighted caseload model every three to five years.

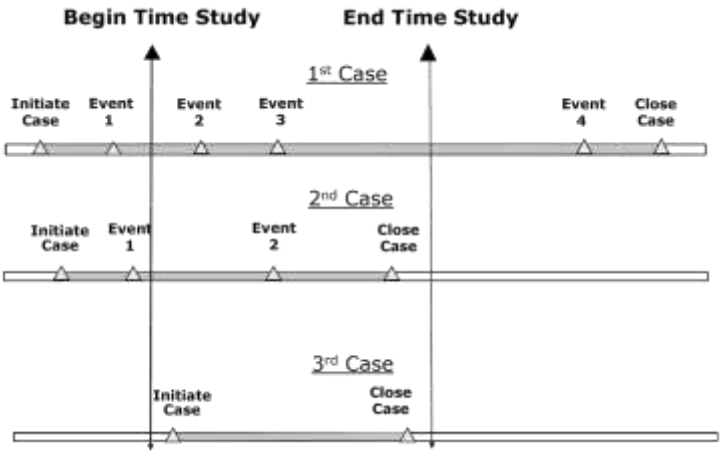
Appendix A: Event-Based Methodology Example

Event-Based Methodology aims to snapshot court activity by comparing the study group's time spent on primary case events to the number of cases entering the court. The study assesses the total working time spent over an average four-week period on processing each case type for which case weights are being developed. Since this approach captures a snapshot, few cases actually complete their journey from filing to final resolution within the study period. However, courts across each county in the state process numerous cases in various stages of their lifecycle. For instance, during the four-week study, a court may handle the initiation of new civil cases while also managing other civil cases (possibly filed months or years earlier) on the trial docket, as well as cases in the post-judgment phase.

If the sample period is representative, the mix of pre-trial, non-trial, and trial dispositions, writing decisions and opinions, post-judgment activities, and therapeutic court activities conducted for each case type, as well as the time allocated to each activity, will reflect the general workload entering the court throughout the year. Therefore, data collected during the study period directly measures the amount of time spent on the full range of key case processing events.

Time data are then combined with new filing numbers. For example, if study participants spent 150,000 minutes processing civil tort cases and there were 250 such cases entered, this would produce an average of 600 minutes (or ten hours) per civil tort case (150,000 minutes/250 cases). This ten-hour case weight is interpreted as the average time to process a civil tort case from filing to final resolution, even though no individual case is tracked from start to finish within the four weeks. Instead, the workload standard is a composite of separate (though likely similar) cases observed at various points in the case lifecycle. Figure A1 illustrates the Event-Based Methodology concept.

FIGURE A1: EVENT-BASED TIME STUDY



Assume the figure above shows the progress of three separate civil tort cases during the four-week period of the study. It is not necessary to track cases from start to finish. Instead, for each type of case examined, the study records the time spent on key processing events throughout each case's life cycle.

For example, Case 1 shows the time needed to process the middle part of a case's life; Case 2 shows the time needed to process the end part of a case's life; and Case 3 demonstrates the time required to complete an entire case of minimal complexity. When the time spent on each event for these three cases is combined, it provides an estimate of the total time needed to process a case, even though not all cases are tracked from start to finish. In the current study, because the time estimates are based on observations from thousands of individual case events for each case type, the methodology is highly reliable.

Appendix B: Case Type Categories and Definitions

A. General Circuit Civil

Contract: Breach of contract (CA), promissory note (CB), specific performance (CS), suit on account (CD), contract other (CE).

Tort: personal vehicular injury (TE), personal injury other (TF), property damage (TG), wrongful death (TH), other tort (TI), employment disc. (TJ), public accommodation (TK).

Extraordinary Remedy: Declaratory judgment (EA), habeas corpus (EB), Injunction (EC), other extraordinary remedy (ED), show cause to enforce jury service (EF), temp. restraining order (EG), unauthorized alien (EI).

Circuit Civil Miscellaneous: Other miscellaneous actions (X1), incarceration reimbursement (X2), arbitration filed (X4), action against garnishee (XA), CAFA forfeit (XB), common law lien petition (XC), contempt (XD), exam judgment debtor (XF), out of state witness (XH), replevin (XI), revival of judgment (XK), delinquent city license fee (XL), delinquent city taxes (XM), delinquent county license fee (XN), delinquent county taxes (XO), delinquent sales tax (XP), delinquent state taxes (XQ), personal property taxes (XR), trial de novo (XS), small claims trial de novo (XT), will contest (XU), small claims certified (XV), motion rules (XW), pro forma (XY), tax action other (XZ).

Administrative Review: Chapter 536 state agency review (IA), driver's license revocation review (IB), TDN of DOR decision (IC), refuse breath (ID), limit driver privilege (IE), other admin. Review (IF), judicial review of DOR dealer license (IG), CC municipal administrative review disincorporation (IX), CC excess revenue administrative review (IZ).

Probate: successor trustee (P3), miscellaneous trust (P5).

Real Estate: Eminent domain/condemnation other (RC), exception (RD), foreclosure (RE), landlord complaint (RF), partition (RG), quiet title (RH), rent and possession (RI), unlawful detainer (RJ), other real estate actions (RK).

B. Civil Expungements

Civil Expungement of records.

C. Time Intensive Circuit Civil/Sexual Predator/ Personal injury

Time Intensive Circuit Civil*:* Application to enforce mechanics lien (RA), eminent domain/condemnation St (RB), personal injury-federal employment liability (TB), personal injury malpractice (TC).

Sexual Predator: Sexual predator (P6).

Personal injury product liability (TD)

D. Asbestos

Asbestos *(TA), (TQ).*

E. Simple Circuit Civil

Civil non-case reports: Transcript judgment (NA), mechanics lien (ND), contraband destruction order (NE), foreign non-case document (NF), cert. of lien-DOR taxes (NJ), search warrant /investigative subpoena (NZ).

Circuit Civil Miscellaneous: Collector of revenue tax cases (X3), establishment of charters (XE), Registration of foreign judgment (XI).

F. Domestic Relations

Domestic Relations:

CS Administrative order with hearing (D1/Q1), CS Contempt (D2/Q2), CS misc. domestic relations (D3/Q3), motion to modify (D4/Q4), paternity (D5/Q5), CS UIFSA initiating (D6/Q6), CS UIFSA responding (D7/Q7), CS URESA initiating (D8/Q8), CS URESA responding (D9/Q9), change of name (DD/QD),

Civil Non-Case Reports:

CS Administrative order (NB), CS administrative order modification (NC).

Contempt – domestic relations (DG/QG), dissolution without children (DH/QH), dissolution with children (DI/QI), habeas corpus-domestic (DJ/QJ), legal separation, annulment, separate maintenance (DK/QK), modify registration of foreign order (DL/QL), motion to modify (DM/QM),

Paternity (DN/QN), reg. of foreign judgment custody (DO/QO), Reg. of foreign judgment dissolution (DP/QP), misc. domestic relations (DR/QR), family access motion (DS/QS), set aside paternity judgment (DT/QT), motion to modify paternity (DU/QU), - FC other misc. actions (QX), CC victim name change (DV/QV).

G. Protection Order

Adult abuse without stalking (DA/QA), adult abuse stalking (DB/QB), adult abuse extension/modification (DC/QC),

Child protection act (DE/QE), child protection extension/modification (DF/QF), registration of foreign protection order (DQ/QQ)

H. Associate Civil

Contract: Breach of contract (CM), promissory note (CN), specific performance (CO), suit on account (CP), contract-other (CQ), contract/account-bulk (CR),

Extraordinary Remedy: Declaratory judgment (EO), habeas corpus (EP), injunction (EQ), other extraordinary remedy (ER), show cause to enforce jury service (ET), temporary restraining order (EU).

Administrative Review: Chapter 536 state agency review (IN), DL revocation review (IO), TDN of DOR decision (IP), refuse breath (IQ), limit driving privilege (IR), other administrative review (IS), SATOP review (IT).

Real Estate: Rent and possession (R1), unlawful detainer (R2), other real estate actions (R3), landlord actions-bulk (R4), application to enforce mechanics lien (RS), eminent domain/condemn St (RT), eminent domain/condemn other (RU), exception (RV), foreclosure (RW), landlord complaint (RX), partition (RY), quiet title (RZ).

Tort: Employment discrimination (TO), public accommodation (TP), personal injury federal employment liability (TR), personal injury malpractice (TS), personal injury product liability (TT), personal injury vehicular (TU), personal injury other (TV), property damage (TW), wrongful death (TX), other tort (TY), tort damages-bulk (TZ).

Associate Civil Miscellaneous: Tax action other (Y1), misc. associate civil other (Y2), arbitration filed (Y4), expunge criminal records (Y5), action against garnishee (YA), CAFA forfeiture (YB), common law property rel. (YC), contempt (YD), establishment of charters (YE), examination judgment debtor (YF), expunge/correct arrest record (YG), out of state witness (YH), registration of foreign judgment (YI), replevin (XJ), revival of judgment (YK), delinquent city license fee (YL), delinquent city taxes (YM), delinquent county license fees (YN), delinquent county taxes (YO), delinquent sales tax (YP), delinquent state taxes (YQ), personal property taxes (YR), gun permit appeal (YS), grandparent visitation (YT), owner/lienholder petition property rel. (YU).

I. Small Claims

Small Claims: Small claims under $100 (YV), Small claims over $100 (YW), Petition revocation conceal carry (YX), Conceal carry appeal (YZ).

J. Garnishment and Execution

K. Adoption

Adoption regular (JD/JP), Adoption stepchild (JF/JR), Adoption adult (JG/JS).

L. Abuse & Neglect/Termination of Parental Rights

Abuse & neglect (JC/JO), Termination of parental rights (JE/JO), Permanency planning motion (JH/JT).

M. Juvenile Delinquency/Status Offense

Status offense (JA/JM), Delinquency (JB/JN), Ext. jurisdiction juvenile (JI/JL), reentry of custody offense (JJ/JK), Minor abortion contest (JU).

N. Circuit Felony

CC Felony (F1), includes felony non-support.

O. Associate Felony

AC Felony (F2).

P. Misdemeanor/Muni Cert./Trial de Novo/Municipal & County Ordinance Drug & Alcohol

CC misdemeanor (M1), AC misdemeanor (M2), CC municipal cert/TDN (MA), CC transfer of probation certification trial de supervision (NG)

AC municipal cert/TDN (MB), AC transfer of probation supervision (NH), CC public def. caseload certification trial de motion (NK)

County Ordinance – Alcohol &Drug Related Traffic (O1), municipal alcohol and drug related traffic (O3).

Misdemeanor criminal non-support.

Q. Traffic/Watercraft/Conservation/Municipal & County Ordinance & Traffic

Infraction (I2), watercraft violation (M3), conservation violation (M4), FCC motion to withdraw guilty plea (NI), county ordinance parking (O2), Capitol police (OA), CC TR State traffic ticket (T1), AC TR State traffic (T2).

R. Decedent Estate

Supervised with will (PA), supervised without will (PB), Independent with will (PC), Independent without will (PD).

S. Incapacitated/Minor Estate

Conservatorship adult (PN), conservatorship minor (PO), conservatorship LTD adult (PP), dispense with conservatorship minor (PQ), Guardianship adult (PR), guardianship minor (PS), Guardianship LTD adult (PT), guardianship/conservatorship adult (PU), Guardian/conservatorship minor (PV), guardian/conservatorship LTD adult (PW), guardianship /conservatorship LTD minor (PY).

T. Simple Probate

Registration of foreign guardianship/ conservatorship adult (G1), registration of foreign guardianship /conservatorship minor (G2), removal of disqual firearm (P0), guardianship STDBY adult (P1), guardianship STDBY minor (P2), Trust registration (P4), will filed during lifetime (P7), miscellaneous – non cases (P8), will filed only deceased (P9), refusal of letters creditor (PE), refusal of letters spouse (PF), refusal of letters minor (PG), small estate affidavit with will (PH), Small estate affidavit without will (PI), determination of

heirship (PJ), will admitted or rejected (PK), guardian LTD minor (PL), adversary proceed. Jackson Co. (PM), required administration (PX), miscellaneous probate other (PZ).

U. Involuntary Detention Petition

Petition 21 day mental health (HB), petition 90 day mental health (HC), petition 180 day mental health (HD), Petition 1 year mental health (HE), petition ECT treatment (HF), petition 30 day alcohol /drug (HP), Petition 90 day alcohol/drug (HQ), involuntary del/treatment out of county J (HR).

V. Application for 96 Hour Detention

App 96 Hour (HA), App 96 Hour – mental health (HG), App 96 Hour – alcohol/drug (HO).

W. Treatment Court

DWI court, adult drug court, mental health court, drug court juvenile/family, child support court, domestic violence court, veterans' treatment court.

X. Passport Issuance

Appendix C: Case-Related Activities and Definitions

1. **Case Document Processing**
   - Processing items in the queue
   - Case initiation
   - Electronically (or otherwise) distributing case documents for review or signature
   - Calling/emailing attorneys due to incorrect e-filing submissions (items put on hold or rejected)
   - Taking case document filings/pleadings over the counter
   - Starting new cases and entering case documents on case management system
   - Starting cases based on jail list or booking register
   - Scanning case documents (pro se, special circumstances)
   - Reviewing case documents for accuracy, completeness, or timeliness
   - Preparing docket sheets
   - Entering/docketing judgments and sentences
   - Copying case documents: certifying, mailing
   - Citations
   - Summons
   - Subpoenas
   - Liens (including mechanics liens)
   - Receipting money to specific cases (cash, money order, credit card, debit account)
   - Applying bond money to a case
   - Refunding money from specific cases
   - Garnishment payouts
   - Judgments (for example, default, summary, transcripts, foreign)
   - Orders (for example, show cause, injunctions, writs, TRO)
   - Commitments
   - Failure to Appear
   - Warrants (Search, Arrest, and Bench)
   - Notices (for example, appeal)
   - Records of Conviction
   - Change of judge requests
   - Change of venue requests
   - Court appointments
     - CASA, Counsel, Guardian ad litem, Next Friend, Receiver.
   - Extradition requests
   - Grand jury documents
   - Interest bearing accounts
   - Master's reports
   - Motions and affidavits in support of request to proceed a poor person
   - Public defender requests

- Publication in legal newspapers requests
- Speedy trial requests
- Transcript preparation requests by OSCA
  - Determining deposit required
  - Coordinating pickup with requesting party
- Computer down time *(Record only if no other non-computer activity can be done)*
- Processing expungements in criminal cases, including review of those cases that are not ultimately expunged
- Probation violation case processing (not in-court work)
- Bill of cost/board bill

---

2. Entering Data into MACSS

- Entering or updating:
  - Participant names
  - Social Security numbers
  - Identification numbers (DCN, IV-D, and court case numbers)
  - Dates of birth
  - Emancipation and/or graduation dates
  - Updating address information
  - Adding or updating family violence indicators in MACSS
- **DO NOT INCLUDE**:
  - Abatements on non-IV-D cases
  - Arrearage adjustment on non-IV-D cases

---

3. Calendaring

- Coordinating schedules/parties such as hearings on ex parte motions or mediation services
- Finding and setting suitable hearing and trial dates
- Entering scheduled hearing and trial events on case management system
- Rescheduling hearings that are reset continued et cetera.
- Updating calendars to reflect what occurred at arraignments/hearings
- Creating/printing out court calendars for posting, preparation for court proceedings, and use in the courtroom

---

4. Response to Requests from Public

- Responding to counter, phone, fax, or e-mail requests for information on a specific case category. For example:
- Assisting parties on the phone with an inquiry about a misdemeanor case.
- Answering a question at the counter about a traffic case

---

5. After Hours and Weekend (Emergency) Case Processing

- Receiving and processing documents for emergency situations at home
- Search warrants, adult abuses ex parte petitions, mental health commitments.
- Traveling to the court/police station/domestic violence shelter to process documents for emergency situations.

---

6. Self-Represented Litigant Assistance

- Responding to phone or counter requests for information by a SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGANT on a specific case category. For example:

- Assisting pro se litigants on a specific case category
- Assisting parties wanting an adult abuse petition or motion for family access order
- Assisting parties with small estate or small claims questions
- Responding to phone or counter requests for genealogy information

7. Courtroom Duties (Note includes Jury Services and Post-Judgment Work)

- Operating sound and/or video recording court proceedings
- Handling papers
- Recording and marking exhibits
- Swearing in witnesses
- Completing judgments, release documents, and other documents in court per judge's instructions
- Referring defendants to treatment providers at sentencing hearing
- In-court scanning of documents
- Copy and save FTR Gold recordings for public and attorneys
- Scanning documents created in court
- Assembling and seating jurors for voir dire on day trial begins
- Motions to modify
- Probation violations and other post judgment hearings
- Scheduling, referring, and monitoring defendants performing community services (in courtroom)
- Finding and setting suitable trial events on case management system (in courtroom)
- Other post judgment activity occurring within the court room

Appendix D: Non-Case-Related Activities and Definitions

a. General Customer Service

- Covering counter for general questions; answering phones, responding to correspondence, publishing; monitoring and maintaining material on a web site, organizing, ordering and stocking forms for public use; assisting with weddings; directing "traffic;" handling media requests; copying tapes for public requests; handling complaints; lost and found.

b. Financial Processing (includes Jury Services)

- Disbursement/distribution of revenue and trust funds; adjustments; daily account verification; end-of-day reconciliation; bank reconciliation and related activities (such as clearing checks in JIS, clearing deposits in JIS); month-end processing; preparing bank deposits; fund transfers; forged checks; working with state auditor; adjustments from bank deposits/returned checks; applying credit card money (JIS); performing voids and re-receipting
- Jury work **NOT** associated with a specific case; processing jury qualification questionnaires and supplemental questionnaires, creating jury panels, monthly jury draws, processing jury correspondence, processing jury attendance sheets, and processing juror payment documents

c. Clerk of Court Office Duties and Supervision

- Processing leave requests; recruiting, hiring and terminating staff; answering general staff questions; providing formal and informal feedback to staff; monitoring use of family medical leave; motivating and mentoring staff; providing informal one-on-one instruction to staff; providing or receiving group instruction on changes to local procedures; conducting and attending staff meetings; completing and reviewing time sheets; processing worker's compensation claims; communicating with OSCA on personnel matters; processing SAM II entries; assigning and tracking identification cards, keys and key cards; acting as payroll designee; handling disciplinary actions.

d. Clerk of Court Day-to-Day Management

- Responding to requests (public records, OSCA judicial transfer requests); report review and preparation; budget/payable/vouchers processing; office management; providing and receiving computer technology and JIS support; computer "down time;" processing mail; creating new forms; coordinating staff coverage; creating forms; court support; public outreach; justice system coordination; participation in regional or statewide projects.

e. Recorder of Deed Time

- Record the amount of time spent on recording deeds in the following counties (Holt, Gentry, Harrison, Mercer, Grundy, Clinton, Carroll, Chariton, Ralls, Howard, Moniteau, Gasconade, Maries, Pulaski, Shannon, and Ozark).

f. Clerk of Court Office Management

- Maintaining inventory, ordering supplies, managing facilities and equipment, developing new forms, coordinating staff and volunteers, etc.

g. Community Activities

- Includes time spent on community and civic activities associated with your role in the courts.

h. Clerk of Court Staff Receiving Training and Staff Development

- Attending in-service training, new employee orientation, national or local conferences. Include traveling to training/conference.

i. Work-Related Travel & Committee Attendance

- All time associated with reimbursable work related travel, such as travel to post office, bank, prison/detention center, mental hospital or other locations, off-site storage, off-site or virtual committee meetings.

j. Vacation, Sick, Other Leave

- Record any leave time taken during the time study (a full day of leave is 8 hours).

k. Time Study Data Recording and Entry

- Record the amount of time spent tracking and entering data for the time study.

Appendix E: Adequacy of Time Survey Results – Primary Participants

TABLE 1: RESPONDENTS' POSITION

Apprentice Court Clerk	23	3%
Court Clerk	222	25%
Deputy Court Clerk	271	31%
Senior Court Clerk	289	33%
Circuit Clerk	0	0%
Administrative Assistant or Senior Administrative Assistant	27	3%
Chief Court Operations Manager	1	0%
Computer Information positions (County Level Only)	3	0%
Court Manager	24	3%
Program Specialist or Senior Program Specialist	17	2%
Total	877	100%

TABLE 2: RESPONDENTS' COURT LOCATION

18th Circuit	4		Dekalb County	1		Nodaway County	3
20th Circuit	7		Dent County	4		Oregon County	3
24th Circuit	15		Douglas County	0		Osage County	2
26th Circuit	12		Dunklin County	5		Ozark County	2
27th Circuit	5		Franklin County	14		Pemiscot County	2
28th Circuit	2		Gasconade County	0		Perry County	4
33rd Circuit	10		Gentry County	2		Pettis County	3
37th Circuit	3		Greene County	34		Phelps County	10
41st Circuit	2		Grundy County	2		Pike County	5
44th Circuit	3		Harrison County	1		Platte County	12
5th Circuit	1		Henry County	3		Polk County	6
Adair County	2		Hickory County	3		Pulaski County	11
Andrew County	3		Holt County	0		Putnam County	1
Atchison County	3		Howard County	1		Ralls County	2
Audrain County	6		Howell County	7		Randolph County	5
Barry County	9		Iron County	4		Ray County	5
Barton County	1		Jackson County	76		Reynolds County	1
Bates County	4		Jasper County	23		Ripley County	5
Benton County	1		Jefferson County	24		Saline County	5
Bollinger County	3		Johnson County	9		Schuyler County	3
Boone County	30		Knox County	3		Scotland County	3
Buchanan County	17		Laclede County	7		Scott County	3
Butler County	9		Lafayette County	4		Shannon County	1
Caldwell County	2		Lawrence County	6		Shelby County	1
Callaway County	7		Lewis County	3		St Charles County	31
Camden County	2		Lincoln County	6		St Clair County	2
Cape Girardeau County	14		Linn County	5		St Francois County	3
Carroll County	2		Livingston County	4		St Louis City	56
Carter County	3		Macon County	1		St Louis County	64
Cass County	20		Madison County	2		Ste Genevieve County	2
Cedar County	2		Maries County	4		Stoddard County	6
Chariton County	2		Marion County	5		Stone County	5
Christian County	16		McDonald County	4		Sullivan County	0
Clark County	4		Mercer County	1		Taney County	7
Clay County	23		Miller County	4		Texas County	2
Clinton County	1		Mississippi County	1		Vernon County	4
Cole County	11		Moniteau County	2		Warren County	8
Cooper County	1		Monroe County	1		Washington County	6
Crawford County	13		Montgomery County	1		Wayne County	2
Dade County	1		Morgan County	3		Webster County	5
Dallas County	2		New Madrid County	5		Worth County	0
Daviess County	2		Newton County	8		Wright County	3

TABLE 3. HOW MANY YEARS HAVE YOU WORKED FOR A MISSOURI CIRCUIT COURT CLERK'S OFFICE?

Less than one year	113	13%
1-3 years	244	28%
4-5 years	124	14%
6-10 years	116	13%
11-15 years	93	11%
16-20 years	63	7%
21-30 years	87	10%
31+ years	37	4%
Total	877	100%

TABLE 4: DURING THE TIME STUDY, WAS YOUR WORK/WORKLOAD REPRESENTATIVE OF A TYPICAL 4-WEEK PERIOD?

Yes	**708**	**81%**
No	169	19%
Total	877	100%

TABLE 4A. PLEASE EXPLAIN HOW YOUR WORK/WORKLOAD WAS DIFFERENT

I was on vacation	48	28%
I took sick/medical leave	48	28%
I had a heavier workload than usual	9	5%
I had a lighter workload than usual	70	41%
I was experiencing technical issues (slow computer, slow case management system, etc.)	10	6%
I was in training	10	6%
I was training a new employee(s)	21	12%
I just started a new position	5	3%
One or more of my colleagues were on leave	26	15%
One or more of my judges were on leave	52	31%
I had a heavy backlog of cases	5	3%
Other (please explain):	53	31%

KEY THEMES EXPLAINING HOW WORKLOAD WAS DIFFERENT

1. Workload Was Not Representative of a Typical Month

The four-week study occurred during an atypical period that included Judicial College, judicial conferences, seasonal slowdowns, and pre-study "catch-up"

time. As a result, court schedules were lighter, filings were reduced, and overall activity did not reflect a normal operating month. Several respondents noted that October is typically a lighter period, further skewing the results.

2. Judicial Absences Directly Reduced Staff Workload

Judges being out for Judicial College, conferences, or leave significantly reduced court activity. Fewer court days translated into fewer filings, less walk-in traffic, and diminished case processing demands. In some instances, associate or primary judges were absent for extended periods, resulting in drastically reduced workloads that are not typical.

3. Time Off and Staffing Gaps Skewed Results

The study period overlapped with substantial staff absences due to vacation, illness (including COVID), and part-time schedules. Several offices were also operating with unfilled positions, which caused uneven workload distribution and required remaining staff to assume additional duties. Training new employees further altered how time was spent during the study.

4. Workload Was Uneven and Unpredictable

Staff reported a mix of unusually slow days and isolated periods of intense workload, such as long jury trials or complex cases. This variability created averages that mask the true day-to-day demands of court operations. Walk-in traffic, which is inherently unpredictable and time-consuming, further contributed to workload fluctuations.

5. Time Study Did Not Capture the Full Scope of Work

Many clerks emphasized that their roles require constant multitasking and frequent interruptions, making it difficult to accurately record time by task. The study captures only work that was actively recorded, not backlogs, deferred tasks, or work waiting on judicial or external action. As a result, the study understates the full volume and complexity of staff responsibilities.

6. Shift Toward Non-Routine or Atypical Work

During the study period, staff spent increased time on activities that are not part of normal weekly operations, including financial reconciliations, audits, procedure updates, data cleanup, IT coordination, training, office moves, and municipal court transitions. While necessary, these tasks reduced time spent on standard court processing and skewed workload measurements.

7. External Factors Reduced Case Volume

External circumstances further reduced measurable workload, including the absence of municipal filings due to prosecutorial leave, fewer after-hours or weekend orders of protection, and limited courtroom availability. Technology issues, such as slow systems, affected productivity but were not fully reflected in the time data.

8. Overall Concern About Validity of the Study

Across responses, staff consistently questioned whether the study accurately reflects typical workload demands. Many expressed concern that the timing, staffing conditions, and judicial absences make the results an unreliable benchmark for assessing long-term staffing needs or operational capacity.

TABLE 5: DURING THE TIME STUDY PERIOD, WAS THERE COURT WORK THAT YOU ENGAGED IN THAT DID NOT GET REPORTED?

Yes	190	22%
No	687	78%
Total	877	100%

TABLE 5A. PLEASE EXPLAIN WHAT WORK WAS NOT REPORTED

I did not report miscellaneous or administrative duties/tasks, such as answering phones, checking email, checking the mail, etc.	105	55%
I did not report multitasking or overlapping tasks, such as work done in the courtroom, conversations regarding work with a colleague, answering phones in the middle of a task, etc.	140	74%
Some of my overtime and/or weekend work did not get reported	18	9%
I worked while I was on vacation/medical/personal leave, but it was not reported	12	6%
I attended some training sessions, but I did not report the time	6	3%
I experienced technical difficulties	24	13%
I was unable to participate and enter my time during the time study	5	3%
Other (please explain):	30	16%

KEY THEMES DESCRIBING WHAT WORK WAS UNREPORTED

1. Incomplete Time Entry Due to Volume and Pace of Work

Many staff reported that they were unable to enter all of their time due to the sheer pace and volume of daily work. Busy court calendars, counter coverage, phone calls, and courtroom duties often took priority over stopping to record time, resulting in missed days, partial entries, or bundled reporting that understated actual effort.

2. Multitasking Is Central to the Work but Not Accurately Captured

Respondents consistently emphasized that multitasking is constant and unavoidable, yet the study structure did not allow time to be double-counted or accurately categorized. Staff routinely perform multiple functions simultaneously—such as answering phones, assisting the public, checking emails, and processing cases—forcing them to report only one task while others went unrecorded.

3. Jury Work Was Misrepresented or Undercounted

Numerous respondents stated that jury-related work was not represented correctly in the study. In some cases, jury duties were combined with financial or other categories, making it impossible to distinguish the true amount of jury work performed. Others noted that jury activity was either mislabeled, underreported, or omitted entirely due to reporting constraints.

4. Study Categories Did Not Reflect Actual Duties

Staff reported that many routine responsibilities did not fit within the available reporting categories, resulting in unreported work. Examples included verifying documents, handling mixed criminal matters, municipal-related tasks after category changes, administrative responsibilities, internal coordination, and non-case-specific duties essential to office operations.

5. Work Occurring Outside Normal Hours Was Not Fully Recorded

Time spent preparing for court before or after regular hours, working through breaks or lunches, and staying late to keep up with workload was frequently not entered. Staff noted that they often work beyond scheduled hours but did not consistently report this time, further understating workload.

6. Interruptions and Public-Facing Duties Were Undercounted

High volumes of phone calls, counter service, passport-related inquiries, pro se assistance, and coordination with external agencies consumed significant time but were difficult to log accurately. Frequent interruptions made detailed time tracking impractical, resulting in substantial underreporting of public-facing work.

7. Supervisory and Informal Work Was Excluded

Supervisory responsibilities, consultations with judges, staff problem-solving, office coordination, and managing internal issues were largely unreportable within the study

framework. Respondents noted that while these tasks consume meaningful portions of the workday, they were either not categorized or intentionally excluded to avoid misrepresentation.

8. Overall Concern That Full Workload Cannot Be Captured

Across responses, staff overwhelmingly expressed that it is not realistically possible to record every task performed in their roles. Constant interruptions, overlapping duties, short staffing, and the need to prioritize service delivery over data entry led many to conclude that the study significantly understates the true scope, intensity, and complexity of their work.

TABLE 6: ADEQUACY OF TIME

	1 Almost Never	2 Rarely	3 Sometimes	4 Often	5 Almost Always	N/A	Average Score
I have sufficient time, on a regular basis to get my work done.	40	69	289	300	177	2	**3.58**
I am able to accomplish what needs to be done during the workday.	26	53	249	327	222	0	**3.76**
When I start a task, I typically have the time to complete the task.	19	56	293	304	204	1	**3.71**
I have the tools and resources to do my job efficiently and effectively.	7	25	169	339	337	0	**4.11**
I have enough time to adequately assist court users/customers/citizens.	10	50	256	321	220	20	**3.81**
There is sufficient time for learning opportunities aligned with my job duties.	74	184	302	198	109	10	**3.10**
I am able to meet deadlines without rushing at the last minute.	30	67	293	319	156	12	**3.58**
I have time to take lunch and breaks throughout the day.	38	76	178	241	335	9	**3.87**
The pace at which I work is sustainable.	19	41	222	348	242	5	**3.86**

TABLE 7: WHAT OBSTACLES (IF ANY) ARE CURRENTLY IN YOUR WAY FROM ACHIEVING SUCCESS IN YOUR JOB?

Obstacles	Number of Respondents	% of Respondents
Constant interruptions and having to multi-task	391	45%
Not enough clerk staff	279	32%
Insufficient pay/benefits	260	30%
Heavy volume of cases and/or transactional workload	254	29%
Poor technology or internet connection	194	22%
Assisting self-represented litigants	158	18%
None	153	17%
Lack of time	150	17%
Continuous changes in laws, processes, public information, etc.	143	16%
Inadequate training	131	15%
Poor leadership/poor management/micro-management	114	13%
Uneven allocation of work and duties	111	13%
Other (please describe)	68	8%
Inadequate equipment (e.g. copiers, computers, etc.)	56	6%
Outdated or poor facilities	54	6%
Not enough court staff	47	5%
Inadequate case management system	46	5%
Lack of funding	39	4%
Not enough judges	28	3%
Lack of resources	25	3%

DETAILED THEMES REGARDING OBSTACLES

1. Chronic Staffing Shortages and High Turnover

Staff consistently reported insufficient staffing levels, with vacant positions, high turnover, and uneven workload distribution placing sustained pressure on a small number of employees. Many indicated they routinely work well beyond normal hours, including weekends and holidays, to keep operations functioning. Short staffing also forces clerks to cover multiple roles simultaneously, limiting their ability to complete core duties adequately.

2. Excessive Multitasking and Constant Interruptions

Multitasking is pervasive and unavoidable, particularly for front-desk and courtroom clerks who must simultaneously manage phones, counter service, case processing, emails, and judicial requests. Frequent interruptions—from the public, attorneys, judges, and coworkers—significantly reduce efficiency and increase the risk of errors. Staff emphasized that the depth and frequency of multitasking are not fully understood or recognized.

3. Technology Failures and System Inefficiencies

Widespread issues with Show Me Courts (SMC), Case.Net, phone systems, and slow or unstable computers were identified as major obstacles. Staff reported frequent system crashes, forced logouts, slow loading times, missing or changing codes, and unannounced system updates. These problems cause delays, rework, frustration, and place clerks in the role of de facto IT support during court operations.

4. Inadequate Training and Constant Process Changes

Respondents cited insufficient training time, frequent procedural changes, and lack of clear guidance as ongoing challenges. New staff often require extensive training while experienced staff have limited opportunity to deepen knowledge or adapt to system changes. Statewide system changes are not always communicated clearly, requiring clerks to learn through trial and error.

5. Poor Leadership, Communication, and Accountability

Many staff described inconsistent direction from supervisors, lack of coordination among management, and minimal follow-up or support. Reports of micromanagement, ineffective communication, and failure to address performance issues contributed to low morale and a toxic work environment. Several respondents noted that strong performers absorb additional work while underperformance goes unaddressed.

6. Compensation Not Aligned with Responsibilities

Staff widely expressed that pay does not reflect the complexity, responsibility, or legal knowledge required for their roles. Clerks routinely correct attorneys, interpret statutes, and manage complex legal processes, yet compensation lags behind comparable positions. Rising cost of living and limited performance-based incentives further exacerbate dissatisfaction and turnover.

7. Heavy and Growing Case Volume, Especially Pro Se Matters

High caseloads, particularly involving self-represented litigants, were cited as extremely time intensive. Pro se cases require substantial explanation, guidance, and follow-up, often diverting staff from other responsibilities. Some staff also noted that case volume is compounded by systemic factors beyond their control, increasing processing demands.

8. Inadequate Facilities and Physical Work Environment

Several respondents raised concerns about outdated facilities, limited workspace, lack of courtroom availability, and unsafe or unhealthy building conditions. Issues such as overcrowding, insufficient desk space, shared equipment, pests, and environmental hazards were reported as directly impacting staff efficiency and well-being.

9. Equipment and Resource Limitations

The removal of individual printers, reliance on shared copiers, insufficient desk space, and outdated hardware were cited as significant inefficiencies. Staff reported time lost retrieving documents, reprinting materials, and navigating shared resources that are frequently unavailable or malfunctioning.

10. Communication Gaps with External Partners

Lack of timely communication from OSCA, municipal prosecutors, and other external partners created delays and uncertainty. Staff reported challenges obtaining responses, receiving late or incomplete filings, and adapting to system or procedural changes without adequate notice.

11. Unrealistic Expectations and Workload Visibility Gaps

Staff expressed that leadership expectations do not align with the realities of daily operations. Much of the work performed—problem-solving, coordination, multitasking, and interruption-driven tasks—is largely invisible but consumes significant time. This disconnect contributes to frustration and a sense that workload challenges are not fully acknowledged.

12. Overall Impact on Staff Morale and Sustainability

Collectively, these obstacles contribute to burnout, stress, and declining morale. Despite strong commitment to public service, many respondents expressed concern about the long-term sustainability of current staffing models, workloads, and workplace conditions without meaningful structural improvements.

ADDITIONAL COMMENT THEMES

1. The Workload Study Timing and Design Are Viewed as Unrepresentative

Many respondents said the study routinely occurs during Judicial College or judges' conferences, which reduces court activity and makes the period atypical. Staff also noted the study often follows a fifth week or other "catch-up" conditions that temporarily lower visible backlog, further distorting results. Several described the tool as too broad for small offices and unable to reflect the true volume of tasks completed or work left undone.

---

2. Staffing Levels Are Below What Is Needed to Sustain Operations

A dominant theme was that offices are operating with too few staff, open vacancies, and limited ability to replace employees due to funding constraints and reliance on outdated staffing allocations. In many locations, managers and experienced clerks work unpaid overtime or extended hours just to keep essential functions moving, raising concerns about burnout and long-term sustainability. Respondents repeatedly tied staffing instability to low pay and difficulty recruiting qualified applicants.

---

3. Pay Is Not Competitive and Drives Turnover

Staff frequently stated compensation does not match the workload, required expertise, or cost of living, particularly in high-volume circuits. Many described losing talent to private-sector roles or even entry-level retail/food service wages, and some reported needing second jobs to stay afloat. Respondents also raised concerns about pay compression, limited advancement opportunities in smaller counties, and uneven fairness between counties or between state and county employees doing similar work.

---

4. Technology and System Performance Continue to Slow Work

Show Me Courts (SMC) was cited repeatedly as slow, unstable, and frequently changing without adequate notice. Staff described timeouts, lag (especially afternoons), error codes, missing or shifting features/codes, and processes—particularly financial/receipting functions—that take significantly longer than they

should. The result is rework, delays, and a constant need for staff to troubleshoot issues while still managing front-facing responsibilities.

---

5. Training and Guidance Are Insufficient for the Complexity of the Job

Many respondents described being "thrown into" new roles or systems with limited hands-on training and incomplete or hard-to-navigate guidance materials. They emphasized that training is difficult to attend due to staffing shortages and court schedules, and that materials become outdated quickly as laws and system functions change. Several asked for more structured, frequent training and clearer, consistent instructions that don't change after months of following prior guidance.

---

6. Leadership, Communication, and Workplace Culture Are Major Pain Points

A number of comments described leadership as unresponsive, inconsistent, or overly focused on micromanagement rather than operational priorities. Staff reported poor communication, lack of accountability for underperformance, favoritism, and inconsistent direction that creates rework and confusion. This was closely tied to low morale, with some describing a work environment that feels demeaning, politically charged, or unsupported.

---

7. Workload Visibility Gaps Hide the True Operational Strain

Respondents emphasized that the study captures time spent, but not the growing backlog, the work deferred due to triage, or the multitasking required to keep cases moving. Many described a constant state of "barely keeping afloat," where urgent work gets done but quality control, reports, maintenance tasks, and long-term cleanup fall behind. Staff suggested that meaningful staffing decisions should consider backlog and real-world workflow complexity, not only the recorded study period.

---

8. Public-Facing Demands and Pro Se Assistance Are Increasing and Unpredictable

Multiple respondents highlighted the time-intensive nature of assisting self-represented litigants and the difficulty of helping without crossing into legal advice. Calls, counter traffic, and pro se needs were described as consuming large blocks of time and disrupting workflow, especially in small offices where everyone must cover everything. Some also noted heightened stress from public interactions and the lack of tools or staffing to absorb that demand.

---

9. Small Courts Feel Disadvantaged Under One-Size-Fits-All Models

Smaller counties emphasized that they must cover all functions with minimal staff, leaving little flexibility for vacations, illness, training, or specialized tasks. They reported being constrained by staffing allocations derived from older data and formulas that don't reflect the full scope of clerk work beyond "filings per clerk." Many called for greater flexibility, more locally informed staffing decisions, and recognition that small offices function differently than large, specialized ones.

National Center for State Courts
300 Newport Ave. | Williamsburg, VA 23185
(800) 616-6164 | **ncsc.org**